



2025 Public Engagement Plan

People-Centered
Planning, Projects
and Services



Disclaimer

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A message from the executive director

Great places don't just happen. The Denver Regional Council of Governments, also known as DRCOG, has been bringing local governments together for 70 years to work on some of the region's most challenging issues. We're the third oldest council of governments in the nation, and since inception, we've recognized the need for public engagement and participation in our work. Because DRCOG is a voluntary association of city, town and county governments, our Board of Directors is made up of people elected by their communities.

As such, DRCOG is, by its very nature, accountable to all residents of the Denver metro area. The people who live, work and play here have varying needs and priorities related to transportation, growth and development, aging in our communities, and a host of other important issues. Their voices must be heard if we're to make this the best region for everyone. While this plan serves first and foremost as a guide for DRCOG employees, I hope it demonstrates — to anyone who might read it — our organization's commitment to meaningful public engagement and participation.

There's no question that DRCOG is well known for our region's ambitious, aspirational plans and involvement in high-profile infrastructure projects. It's my hope that this plan enhances our engagement with the wide range of people who call our region home.



Douglas W. Rex
Executive Director



How to use this document

Have you ever wondered how regional planning choices are made? Or how you or your organization can be part of the process? DRCOG staff have prepared this document to answer those questions.

This document is:

- A guidebook to help DRCOG staff plan and implement effective public engagement.
- A statement of DRCOG's commitment to include the public in decisions.
- A list of DRCOG's principles, goals and implementation strategies for engagement.

For staff

Use this document to plan public engagement. Make sure you follow the principles and use the suggested tools and techniques outlined here.

For the community

Use this document to learn about DRCOG's engagement process. This can help you figure out how to stay involved and make your voice heard. This first chapter will summarize current ways to stay informed, but feel free to dive deeper.

Quick start

"I want to plan engagement for a specific project."

Start with [Chapter 2: DRCOG's principles of public engagement](#) (page 14), [Follow the steps for public engagement](#) (page 20) and [Appendix C: Potential participants](#) (page 60).

"I want to run a useful public event."

Start with [Chapter 4: How to engage the public](#) (page 27) and [Appendix D: Additional resources](#) (page 64).

"I want to evaluate a public engagement event."

Start with [Follow the steps for public engagement](#) (page 20) and [Choose appropriate public engagement techniques](#) (page 28).

"I want to learn how regional planning choices are made."

Start with [What is DRCOG?](#) (page 11) and [How to host a public hearing](#) (page 36).

"I want to learn how I can be part of the planning process."

Start with [Stay informed](#) (page 7) and [Committee and Board approval pathway](#) (page 37).

Stay informed

Attend a meeting

Most of DRCOG's meetings are open to the public. Meetings of the Advisory Committee on Aging, Regional Transportation Committee, Transportation Advisory Committee and Board of Directors always include time for public comment.

All meetings are listed on [the event calendar](#) on DRCOG's website, drcog.org.

When a major plan is presented for public review or has an upcoming public hearing, the DRCOG website will provide information about how to provide comments on that document and details about attending the hearing.

Connect with DRCOG

DRCOG staff want your feedback! Share thoughts or ideas on any of DRCOG's projects at any time by:

Mail

Send written comments to DRCOG, 1001 17th Street, Suite 700, Denver, CO 80202.

Email

Send an email to drcog@drcog.org.

Social media

Keep up to date with DRCOG's work by following the organization's social media accounts.



Facebook.com/Denver.Regional.Council.of.Governments



X.com/DRCOGorg



Instagram.com/drcogorg



Youtube.com/@DRCOG1

Engage with projects

Go to engage.drcog.org to find a project currently underway that's seeking feedback!

1



DRCOG and public engagement basics

What is public engagement?

Public Participation Partners defines public engagement as “the process of communicating with the public and involving them in problem-solving or decision-making.” This refers to a wide variety of activities — from sharing information about an upcoming project to community-led focus groups. Public engagement is made up of two parts: “the public” and “engagement.”

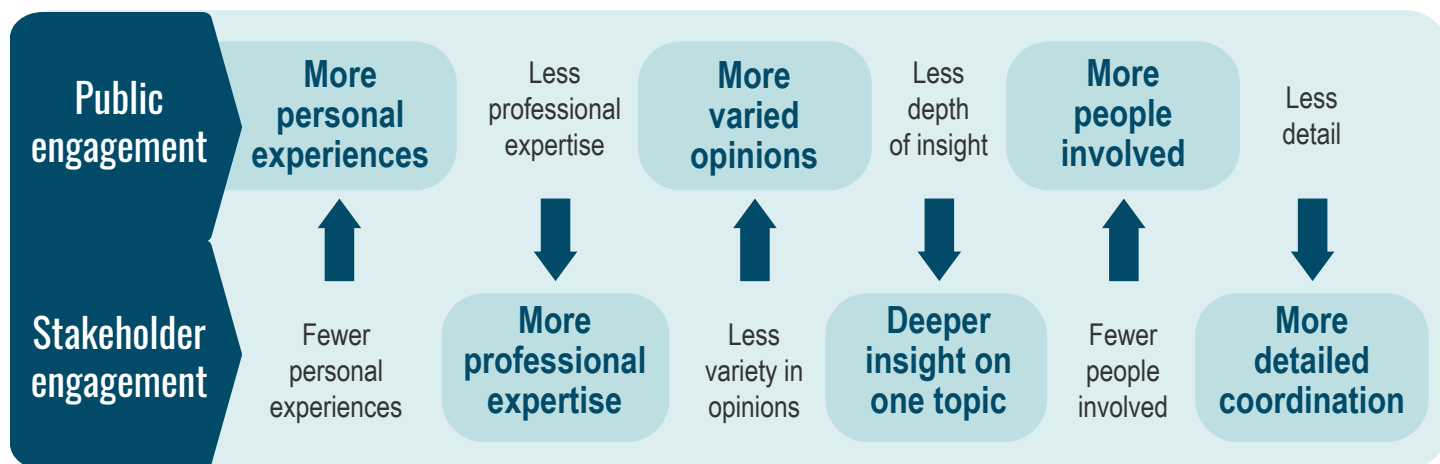
What is engagement?

Engagement also has a wide definition. Engagement can be:

- Asking for and receiving feedback on potential decisions.
- Keeping people informed and involved.
- Working with people to learn their interests, values and needs.

Engagement is also a spectrum. It can be done at a low level, to inform, or at a higher level, all the way up to collaborate. For more information on levels of engagement, refer to [Follow the steps for public engagement](#) (page 20).

Types of engagement



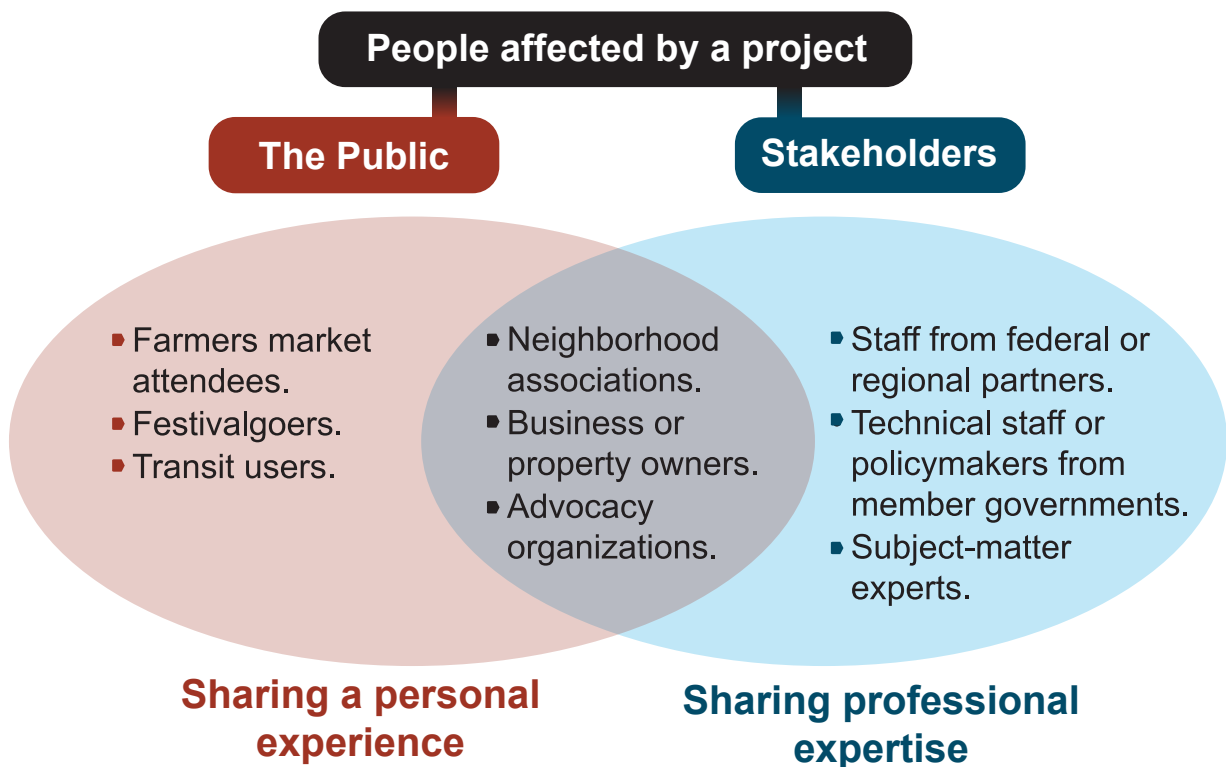
Who is the public?

The public can be just about anybody, but the term typically refers to people who will give feedback based on their lived experience.

Keep in mind that the category a group falls into (“the public” or “stakeholder”) can change depending on the project.

Wait, isn't the public a stakeholder, too?

Although the public is a stakeholder, it's common for staff to say “stakeholder engagement” to refer to working with DRCOG's professional partners. Furthermore, the difference between stakeholder engagement and public engagement is not a clear line. It is a spectrum.



What is DRCOG?

The Denver Regional Council of Governments is a planning organization where local governments collaborate to establish guidelines, set policy and allocate funding in the areas of:

- Transportation and personal mobility.
- Growth and development.
- Aging and disability resources.

DRCOG's planning area covers:

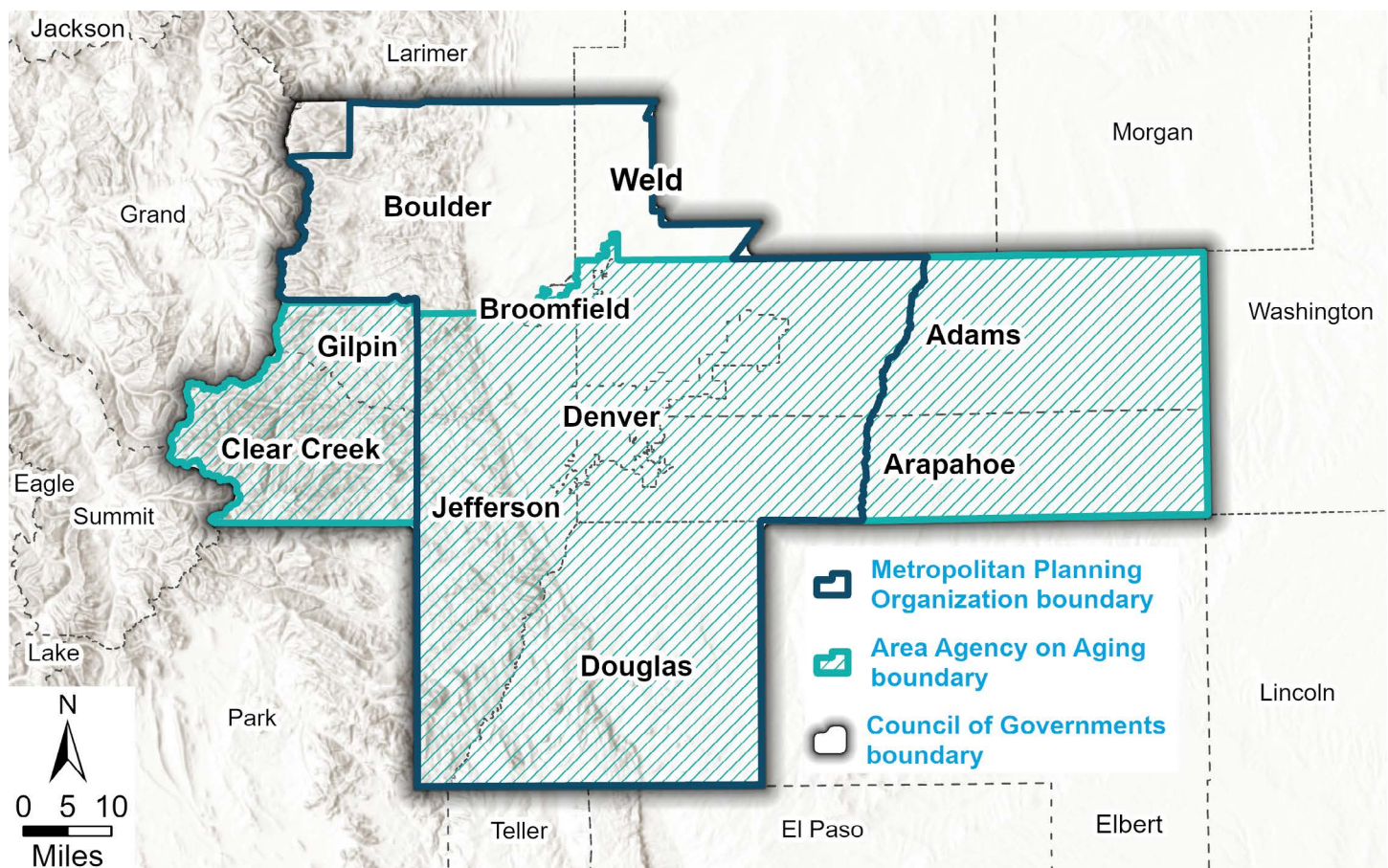
- Adams County.
- Arapahoe County.
- Boulder County.
- Clear Creek County.
- Douglas County.
- Gilpin County.
- Jefferson County.
- The City and County of Broomfield.
- The City and County of Denver.
- Southwest Weld County.

Specific programs or services may have different service areas.

DRCOG's role in the region

DRCOG is ...	Which means ...
A council of governments.	DRCOG is a planning organization that provides staff expertise to local member governments. DRCOG also acts as a forum for these local governments.
A regional planning commission (per Colorado state statute).	DRCOG prepares Metro Vision, a plan for the physical development of the region.
A federally designated area agency on aging.	DRCOG plans and provides comprehensive services to address the needs of the region's older adults and people living with disabilities.
The region's federally designated metropolitan planning organization, or MPO.	DRCOG carries out the MPO planning process for all or part of eight counties. This encompasses more than 3,600 square miles.
A designated recipient of Federal Transit Administration Section 5310 program funds.	DRCOG receives Section 5310 funds for the Denver-Aurora Urbanized Area.
The author of the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.	The region can use special funding programs from the federal Economic Development Administration to fund projects that address the foundational needs of successful economic development efforts in the region.

DRCOG planning boundaries



Author: GC, 1/30/25

Location: GIS\Requests\PublicEngPlan_Map

Data: DRCOG, Esri Basemap; EPSG 6428

Map disclaimer found at data.drcog.org/about.

If you need digital accessibility assistance, submit a request at drcog.org/access or call 303-455-1000. Please expect a response within 72 hours (three business days).

Why does DRCOG have this plan?

Public engagement and participation are essential

This plan will help make sure DRCOG:

- Understands the needs and interests of people in the region.
- Is responsive.
- Addresses ideas and concerns raised.
- Informs the community of critical decisions.

This builds trust between the community and DRCOG, improving project outcomes. Without public involvement, DRCOG's plans are less effective. The public often identifies aspects that staff may overlook. DRCOG's initiatives work better with community feedback.

DRCOG is committed to meaningful public engagement

Transportation planners must include public engagement in their plans. The Area Agency on Aging has an ethical responsibility to its clients. Regional planners need public feedback to create effective plans.

Furthermore, without involvement from the public, DRCOG's plans suffer. DRCOG staff should look for opportunities to go beyond the minimum requirements. Consider reaching out to historically underrepresented groups that may not be directly involved in a project, as they may have valuable insights.



2



DRCOG's principles for public engagement

Early engagement

DRCOG staff engage the public toward the beginning of each project, or when members of the public can have the greatest effect on shaping the direction of DRCOG's efforts.

Ongoing engagement

DRCOG staff engage the public throughout development of a project, or at specific phases identified early in the process. Staff provide members of the public with clear and specific timelines and methods for providing their perspectives. DRCOG staff will continue to receive public input through Board of Directors meetings, public forums and public hearings. For some projects, staff will host ongoing community and interest group meetings.



Tip for success

Keep people up to date during project milestones. Milestones could include the beginning of a plan, key decision points or preparation of the final draft.

Timely and adequate notice

DRCOG staff inform the public about the agency's actions or activities through its website, drcog.org. Staff also distribute notices of pending policy actions to a variety of media. The project manager should determine if there are any notice requirements. Refer to [Follow the steps for public engagement](#) (page 20).

Public hearings are advertised in the media of record (currently The Denver Post).

Consistent access to information

DRCOG staff should proactively upload project materials to the DRCOG website. If a member of the public reaches out requesting information, staff should provide it where possible.

Staff should provide document translations when requested and ensure all documents are accessible. This ensures information is available to all people, not just able-bodied English speakers.

Public review and comment on plans

DRCOG staff should follow all required public review periods. For projects lacking requirements for public engagement, staff should strive for a 30-day public review period.

Staff should make public review drafts available on DRCOG's website. DRCOG accepts public comment through mail, email, online engagement tools and drcog.org. Public comments are not directly accepted through social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

DRCOG staff will consider and respond to public concerns when preparing draft documents. They will edit documents and plans in response to public feedback.

Public hearings

When DRCOG conducts a formal public hearing, members of the public may provide comment to the DRCOG Board.

Some plans and projects are also discussed in committee meetings prior to a formal public hearing. Participation of the public is welcome at these meetings, both in person and online through Zoom.

Refer to [How to host a public hearing](#) (page 36) for more information. For formal comment periods and hearings, staff will provide all comments to the Board of Directors. When the public provides input through other avenues, staff will respond appropriately.

Invitation and consideration of perspectives from underrepresented communities

Staff should invite members of historically underrepresented communities to participate and be involved in decision-making and planning. These communities can face more barriers to engaging with regional planning and have therefore not always had meaningful opportunities to share their perspectives.

Historically underrepresented communities include but are not limited to:

- People of color.
- People with low income.
- People with limited English proficiency.
- Older adults ages 60 and older.

- Youth ages 17 and younger.
- People with a disability.
- Households without a motor vehicle.
- People born outside the United States.
- Single-parent households.
- Housing-cost-burdened households.

Reaching underrepresented groups requires more effort and some out-of-the-box thinking. Staff shouldn't expect people to come to DRCOG — DRCOG should go to them. For example, staff can work with organizations the community trusts, rather than only soliciting the community directly.

Staff should keep in mind the barriers that may keep people from participating. The resources listed in [Appendix D](#) can help staff identify communities facing additional challenges and how to approach reaching them.

Regular review of public engagement processes

DRCOG staff regularly review the implementation of this plan and the principles, steps, techniques and tools in this plan. Refer to [Follow the steps for public engagement](#) for more information on this process.

DRCOG staff should use public engagement evaluations to inform future engagement. Engagement strategies that do not work well may need to be eliminated in the future. Talk to the public engagement planner to learn what strategies have worked well in the past.

3



How to prepare for public engagement

Understand the purpose of engagement

Public engagement is essential to project success

For projects without formal requirements, DRCOG staff should pursue appropriate public engagement.

Public engagement should:

- Provide meaningful opportunities to participate.
- Involve broad and varied perspectives.
- Communicate complete, accurate, understandable and timely information.

The public will have perspectives you need to hear. Understanding the lived experience of the public is essential. To develop a plan or project that will respond to the needs of the public, you must learn what those needs are.

For more information on the federal and state requirements for planning, refer to [Appendix A](#) (page 54).

DRCOG must follow certain public engagement requirements

You should invite the region's residents and stakeholders to share their perspectives on essential regional issues. This plan outlines the actions to be carried out by DRCOG staff to ensure there are opportunities for the public to be involved in DRCOG's activities, as required by federal regulations.

For more information, refer to [Chapter 5: Additional details by topic](#) (page 38) and [Appendix A: Planning laws and regulations](#) (page 54).

Understand the role of staff

The public engagement planner will help other staff members with all things public engagement. You should involve the public engagement planner early and keep them involved throughout the project. The public engagement planner works within the Communications and Marketing division.

The project manager, the public engagement planner and other DRCOG staff will plan the engagement work. Any employee can take on a public engagement role, but there are staff whose job is public engagement. Reach out to them!

Build upon existing relationships

You can go beyond your existing networks. Identify regional residents who may never have been invited to participate in previous decision-making efforts. For example, a potential participant might be a valued contributor to another division's programs but unfamiliar with the entirety of DRCOG's activities.

DRCOG also maintains robust relationships with organizations that may be important partners in public engagement activities. Talk to your supervisor to learn more about these partners.

DRCOG does not plan alone

Even though DRCOG puts an emphasis on planning at the local, regional, state and federal levels, that is not the only option. Public participation happens at the corridor and project levels, too. The public may get more involved at the project level.

DRCOG's engagement works with, but does not replace, project-specific engagement. For example, local governments may look to DRCOG's 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan for guidance when embarking on a corridor study.




Steps for public engagement

-  Determine federal, state or other partner requirements.
-  Define the goal of the project.
-  Determine the goal of inviting public participation.
-  Determine the appropriate level of public engagement.
-  Identify potential participants.
-  Identify the right tools and techniques.
-  Implement public engagement efforts.
-  Measure, demonstrate and report the results of engagement.

Follow the steps for public engagement

While the process will vary somewhat with each project, there are eight important steps. These steps may not be linear; many steps may occur at the same time or may be implemented in a different order.

-  Determine federal, state or other partner requirements.

If the project will receive state, federal or other funding, there may be requirements for public engagement.

If you determine that the project is not subject to minimum requirements, you can skip this step.

If your plan is not on the list on the next page, be sure to double-check the requirements anyway.

A lack of minimum requirements does not mean that a project won't include public engagement.

Refer to [page 36](#) for instructions on preparing for a public hearing.

Even if a project does not have a requirement for public engagement, the perspectives of the region's residents are essential. You should strive to go beyond the minimum.

Public engagement requirements for DRCOG plans

DRCOG plan	Public review period	Public hearing at DRCOG Board of Directors meeting	Public notice requirement
2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan	30 calendar days	Required	Yes
Active Transportation Plan	Not required, but strive for 30 calendar days	Not required	No
Area Agency on Aging four-year plan	No specific review period	Public hearing required at Advisory Committee on Aging	Yes
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy	30 calendar days (This plan does not have a separate requirement but requires that DRCOG be consistent with similar plans.)	Required	Yes (This plan does not have a separate requirement but requires that DRCOG be consistent with similar plans.)
Coordinated Transit Plan	Not required, but strive for 30 calendar days	Not required	No
Housing Strategy	Not required	Not required	No
Metro Vision	30 calendar days	Required	Yes
Nondiscrimination program	30 calendar days	Required	Yes
Other technical assistance, regional, or modal plans, studies, or reports	Not required	Not required	No

DRCOG plan	Public review period	Public hearing at DRCOG Board of Directors meeting	Public notice requirement
Public Engagement Plan	45 calendar days	Required	Yes
Regional Complete Streets Toolkit	Not required, but strive for 30 calendar days	Not required	No
Regional Housing Needs Assessment	Not required, but strive for 30 calendar days	DRCOG is not required to host a public hearing, but local governments using DRCOG's assessment to fulfill Colorado requirements are required to host a public meeting and submit any comments to DRCOG.	No
Regional Multimodal Freight Plan	Not required, but strive for 30 calendar days	Not required	No
Regional Transportation Operations and Technology Strategic Plan	Not required, but strive for 30 calendar days	Not required	No
Taking Action on Regional Vision Zero	Not required, but strive for 30 calendar days	Not required	No
Transportation Demand Management Strategic Plan	Not required, but strive for 30 calendar days	Not required	No
Transportation Improvement Program	30 calendar days	Required	Yes
Unified Planning Work Program	Not required, but strive for 30 calendar days	Not required	No

2



Define the goal of the project.

Think about the overall goal of the project. If the project has many phases, consider the approach and goal for each phase of the process. There may be a different goal for each project phase, so each phase may involve different levels of public engagement.

Think through these prompts:

- The goal of this project is to ...
- This project will result in ...
- The project will be successful if ...

If it is difficult to complete these prompts, consider revisiting the project plan with a focus on the role of public engagement.

3



Determine the goal of inviting public participation.

Why or how does public engagement contribute to the project's overall goal? The purpose of public engagement will become the foundation for choosing techniques.

Think through these prompts:

- The purpose of public engagement for this project (or phase) is ...
- Public engagement will be successful if ...

Refer to [Appendix B: Public engagement planner assistance form](#) (page 58) for a list of additional brainstorming prompts.

4



Determine the appropriate level of public engagement.

Each project is unique and may warrant a different level of engagement.

Consider the number of people who will be affected and the role of the public. If the project is likely to affect most of the region's residents or a wide range of people from various backgrounds, "inform" and "consult" approaches (detailed in the graphic on the following page) are likely most appropriate.

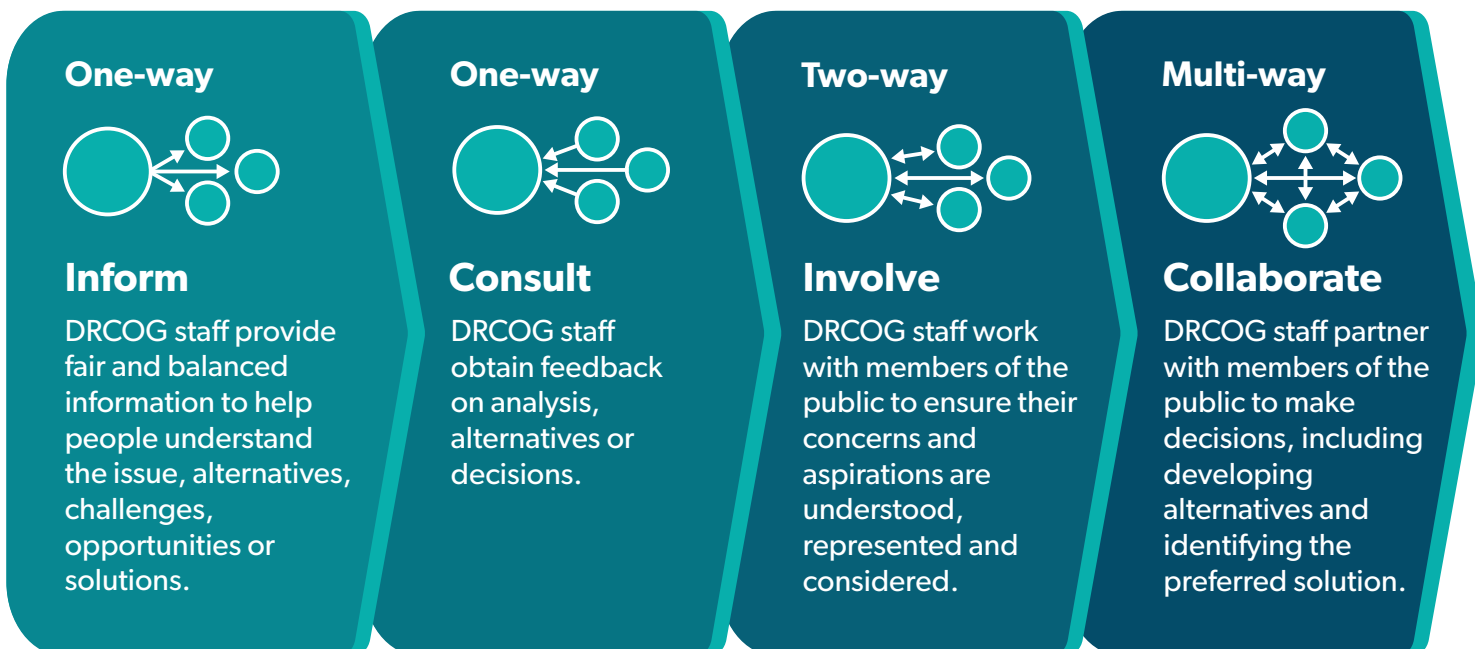
If the project will affect a smaller number of people, or those in specific neighborhoods, communities or with particular demographic characteristics, "involve" or "collaborate" approaches may be more suitable.



Tip for success

Be willing to change the goals and level of engagement as a project develops. If a strategy is not effective, don't keep it!

Levels of engagement



5



Identify potential participants.

Analyze who will be affected by the project and how to consider their perspectives. Work with the public engagement planner to perform this analysis.

Collaborate with other DRCOG staff members to:

- Leverage existing tools for public engagement.
- Identify segments of the public to reach out to.
- Gain local contacts in the community surrounding the project.
- Learn which organizations have worked on similar projects.
- Compile and analyze the demographics of neighborhoods close to the project.

Find a list of community services and organizations in [Appendix C: Potential participants](#). These organizations may be interested in participating directly, or they may be able to point you in the right direction.

Consider how to go beyond the basics and involve a wide range of people. Are there other types of organizations, professionals and members of the public with whom DRCOG has not previously interacted? Are there groups that have provided input in the past but who have not recently been actively engaged? Work with community leaders to make sure you are gaining a local perspective.

6



Identify the right tools and techniques.

Work with the public engagement planner to identify the best tools and techniques for your project. Remember the levels of engagement discussed in Step 4. Don't ask people for more information than DRCOG will use. This erodes trust in DRCOG and will make people less likely to get involved in the future.

Consider not only public engagement techniques, but also how to communicate to participants:

- How DRCOG will use the information.
- How their perspectives will inform the decisions DRCOG makes.
- How their participation reflects the varied views of the region's residents.
- How their input affects the outcome of decisions.
- How they can provide feedback on their experiences of the public engagement process.

Consider engagement tools during the scoping process and include them in the project scope and budget. The project budget will determine:

- How much other DRCOG divisions are involved in a project.
- If DRCOG staff will charge their time to a specific grant.
- The amount of work Communications and Marketing will need to do for the project.
- The type of engagement strategies available.
- If a consultant will be hired to support engagement.

A good project budget will help facilitate good engagement.

7



Implement public engagement efforts.

Work with the public engagement planner to develop a strategy. This strategy should include the techniques for different phases of the project and how to measure success. Consider questions like:

- If public engagement is successful, what will I have learned?
- What perspectives am I missing?
- What kind of feedback am I looking for?

Formalize this strategy in a document that staff can reference throughout the project. While this guide will help you stay organized, remember that you can change it as needed. Refer to [How to engage the public](#) (page 27) for more information on implementation.

8



Measure, demonstrate and report the results of engagement.

Evaluate public engagement before, during and after

Evaluate engagement before, during and after an engagement event to determine whether the project is on track to meet its objectives. Evaluating the success of engagement strategies is critical to improving the overall effectiveness of engagement in the future.

Review user feedback. Provide opportunities such as a final question at the end of a survey, asking the respondent how DRCOG can improve its process. Include information during engagement that explains how DRCOG will use the information. When the project is complete,

make it clear how engagement influenced the final decisions.

The techniques in Chapter 4 include possible metrics. Which activities gave valuable feedback? Which groups did this project reach? Were there any people left out? How can DRCOG reach them better next time? This analysis can help you stay organized and learn from past projects.

Designate a member of the project team to coordinate how the team will gather, compile and report on criteria and measurements throughout all project stages. Measuring progress toward goals throughout the project allows you to make corrections while the efforts are still underway.

Document engagement and the planning process

DRCOG's policy documents include resolutions, technical reports, white papers, consultant reports and in-house reports. These policy documents should outline the project's engagement process. For example, the 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan includes a summary of comments, along with staff responses.

DRCOG staff prepare summaries of all meetings of DRCOG committees and the Board of Directors, which are available upon request and on the DRCOG website. Staff provide documentation of key decision points in planning processes through public outreach.

The public may request to view or receive a copy of all reports developed and compiled by DRCOG staff. All DRCOG publications can also be downloaded from drcog.org.

For transparency's sake, your project should document:

- Timeliness of informational materials on the web.
- Validity and accuracy of mailing and email lists.
- Compilation and acknowledgement of any complaints about the public engagement process.
- Assessment of the value of public input to decision-makers.
- Assessment of the need for new strategies or adjustments.

4



How to engage the public

Determine how the project will use community input

Refer to the engagement goals you chose in Step 3 of “How to prepare for public engagement.” Take time to plan how you will use community data. Community input can help you:

- Establish community vision.
- Refine existing ideas and discover new ones.
- Determine priorities.
- Identify unanticipated issues.
- Check staff work.

Determine how community data can inform the project, and expect to catalog the data accordingly.

Choose appropriate public engagement techniques

Refer to the level of public engagement you chose in Step 4 of “How to prepare for public engagement.” Consider the techniques that encourage the appropriate level of public engagement for the project.

Also consider the funding guidelines that apply to the project. Be sure to follow all rules related to the funds you are using. Refer to the latest DRCOG policies, and reach out to Administration and Finance if you have questions about the rules that apply to your funding source.

If you are not sure how to use a particular technique, please work with the public engagement planner.

Public engagement strategies can move up or down on the list on the following page depending on how the activity is designed. For example, an open house that has no opportunity for the public to comment (perhaps as an informational session at the end of the project) will be a “strategy that informs.” On the other hand, a focus group hosted by staff who are constantly listening and reevaluating their project with feedback could be upgraded to a “strategy that collaborates.”

DRCOG’s Communications and Marketing staff can help with:

- Placing timely public notices in mass and niche media (for example, publications serving non-English speakers).
- Ensuring that media alerts and releases are distributed to appropriate news outlets.
- Posting announcements to DRCOG’s website and social media channels.

Strategies that inform

Strategy: Hold a news briefing or submit media releases

Metrics: Number of media who attend, number of stories as a result

Strategy: Submit op-eds to local news outlets

Metric: Number of op-eds published compared to number submitted

Strategy: Develop a video to share online or on TV

Metric: Number of views

Strategy: Post on social media

Metric: Number of reposts, likes or views

Strategy: Host a website or page with information about the project and past meetings

Metric: Number of visitors, visits or downloads

Strategy: Report on final outcomes via mail or email

Metric: Number of people reached

Strategy: Send text blasts

Metric: Number of people reached

Strategy: Create a comment matrix, sharing how DRCOG staff used public feedback

Metric: Number of views



Tip for success

Use some of the “inform” strategies to get the word out about public meetings.

Strategies that consult

Strategy: Attend standing meetings of community, partner or faith-based organizations

Metrics: Number of meetings attended, number of post-meeting inquiries from attendees

Strategy: Conduct open houses

Metrics: Number of attendees, number of comments received

Strategy: Conduct a survey

Metric: Number of responses

Strategy: Create an interactive map

Metric: Number of responses

Strategy: Share draft plans and collect feedback from the public

Metrics: Number of comments, number of public meetings on draft plans

Strategy: Attend community events such as farmers markets, festivals or block parties

Metrics: Number of events attended, number of incoming contacts



Tip for success

Go to community events that are already happening instead of trying to host separate events.

Strategies that involve

Strategy: Cohost workshops with community groups and business associations

Metrics: Number of workshops cohosted, number of post-workshop inquiries from attendees

Strategy: Sponsor a forum or summit with partner organizations or the media

Metrics: Number of forums sponsored, number of post-forum contacts

Strategy: Conduct focus group meetings with key interest groups

Metrics: Number of attendees, number of comments received

Strategy: Host community advisory committee meetings

Metrics: Number of attendees, number of comments received

Strategy: Facilitate public discussions

Metrics: Number of participants, number of post-discussion comments received from participants

Strategy: Form strategic partnerships

Metrics: Number of partners, number of new participants

Strategies that collaborate

Strategy: Contract with community-based organizations

Metrics: Number of contracts with community-based organizations, number of participants brought in by the organization that DRCOG wouldn't have otherwise reached

Strategy: Run a design workshop

Metrics: Number of attendees, number of changes made because of the workshop



Tip for success

Make sure the design workshop is formatted in a way that is understandable to a general audience; otherwise, it will be difficult to get meaningful feedback.

Simply using a particular technique won't guarantee meaningful results.

Tailor public meetings to the community. Take the time to understand the barriers between the technique and the community. Will they struggle to learn about the event? Are there community members who work odd hours and can't attend a weekend meeting? Consider questions like this when preparing for public engagement.

Follow legal requirements and best practices

Things to do every time

These items are either required by law or by DRCOG policy.

- Include information on how to request interpretation or Americans with Disabilities Act accommodation at meetings.
- Make sure public meeting venues are accessible.
- Send out public meeting notices where required.
- Work with Communications and Marketing.
- Make sure all published documents are made accessible according to the DRCOG Digital Accessibility Policy.
- Offer access to people with limited English proficiency. (Consult DRCOG's [Limited English Proficiency Plan](#) for more information.
- If the document is vital, get it translated into other languages. A list of vital documents is included in DRCOG's translation policy.
- Follow any additional requirements for your subject area (refer to [Additional details by topic](#), page 38).



Tip for success

Even if your plan does not require an official notice, you should advertise your meeting to the public ahead of time so people can plan to attend.



Tip for success

Be willing to change your project and ideas after you receive feedback from the public.



Tip for success

There are tradeoffs between virtual and in-person meetings. Virtual meetings may be easier for working adults to attend, but people without good internet access may struggle to attend. Virtual meetings often get more attendees, but the quality of the conversation is better in-person. Hybrid meetings are generally ineffective.

What are these policy limitations?

There are strict federal rules around some incentive-based strategies, and DRCOG staff must carefully document their use. Although these strategies can be powerful, please discuss with the public engagement planner before implementing.

Additionally, plan these incentives carefully to ensure they reach the target community. This may involve using in-person meetings and existing contact lists, or relying on community contacts to recruit participants.

Things to consider doing

These items are useful for getting more people involved in your public engagement.

- Vary the time of day for events.
- Use many different visualization techniques such as maps, graphics and charts.
- Train staff to be alert to and anticipate the needs of low-literacy participants.
- Offer cultural mediators.
- Give people opportunities to choose or shape alternatives.
- Vary the style of engagement; include both in-person and virtual meetings.
- If the project is in a place where many people don't speak English, proactively provide interpretation services.
- Host a meeting in the primary language spoken and provide interpretation for English-speaking staff.
- Provide translated versions of meeting materials and promotional materials.
- Offer incentives to community members who have financial or other barriers to attending (comes with policy limitations).
- Offer food if a meeting takes place around a mealtime (comes with policy limitations).
- Offer transit passes for meeting attendees (comes with policy limitations).
- Offer child care so parents may participate more actively (comes with policy limitations).
- Get your materials proofread by someone not involved in the project.
- Invite community organizations to participate and consider compensating these organizations for their work (comes with policy limitations).

Use only if appropriate for the project

These items may not be useful in every project.

- Buy print advertising.
- Buy online advertising.
- Buy radio or television advertising or negotiate for free public service announcements.



Tip for success

Consider the cost-benefit ratio for the tool you are using. For example, an open house may be expensive to host compared with attending an existing community event, for the same benefit.

Successful example: Bike to Work Day

In 2024, Bike to Work Day had:

- 19,000 participants.
- 256 rider appreciation stations.
- 532 companies in the Business Challenge.

Keys to success:

- Multiple stations across the region.
- Support from DRCOG's member governments and many partners.
- Fun incentives for participants.
- Engagement for different projects all working together.

Consider leveraging large events like Bike to Work Day to get input on other DRCOG projects! In 2024, the Colorado Department of Transportation and DRCOG both used Bike to Work Day to promote their active transportation plans. Building on existing events can give a project a lot of promotion without a lot of extra work. Bike to Work Day happens every year at the end of June, so check if your project's timeline fits.





Host a public meeting

Not every project will use public meetings, but they are a common platform for engagement. Many different techniques can be used at public meetings; keep these tips in mind when running one.

Be sure to bring translated versions of materials if the community has limited English proficiency.

Public meeting checklist

Running a public meeting? Consider bringing these items:

- Name tags for staff.
- Blank name tags for participants.
- Sign-in sheet.
- Pens.
- Markers.
- Poster/handout about the project.
- Comment cards and comment card box.
- Sandwich boards, posters or other tools to point people in the direction of the venue.
- Visual tools such as maps, PowerPoint or Mentimeter polls.
- Printed copies of surveys.
- Note-taking tool for facilitators.

Tips for keeping costs low:

- Look for free or discounted spaces in libraries, recreation centers and municipal buildings.
- Check for discounts for nonprofits.
- Leverage existing materials.

Set expectations

Spend some time setting expectations at the beginning of the meeting. Give people background information about the project. Why this project? Why now? At the end of the project, what will be changing? Be transparent about what the project can and can't accomplish.

Explain how decisions are made

Be clear about who makes the final decision on a project. Is it DRCOG, CDOT or another agency? If it is DRCOG, give the public a clear explanation of how DRCOG will make the decision. If the decision-making process is clear and fair, people who disagree with the decision may still understand and support the project's approach.

Be a platform for people to share their needs

With so many projects ongoing at once, it's easy for the public to get confused about who's running what project. Even within DRCOG, different teams are in charge of different projects at the same time. If someone uses your meeting to express frustration about something unrelated to your project, don't dismiss them. Take the time to listen to their problem — you might know who can help them. Even if their comment might not be relevant to the current project, community service builds trust.

If it's not possible for you to address their problem, be sure to point them in the right direction and consider following up to make sure they got assistance.

How to host a public hearing

If your project requires public comment or a public hearing, follow these steps.

1 The chair of the Board of Directors sets a public hearing date.

The project must have a 30- or 45-day period for document review before the public hearing. The hearing date is announced at the Board meeting prior to the public hearing (which may be fewer than 30 days from the close of the review period). The notice period may be reduced by the Board chair in the event of a special or emergency circumstance that requires action by DRCOG. In cases like this, every effort will be made to provide a minimum of 15 days' notice before the public hearing.

2 DRCOG staff notify the public about the hearing.

Staff must publish a legal notice of the hearing in the media of record (currently The Denver Post) at least 30 days in advance of the public hearing (or at least 15 days in unique cases to respond to federal legislation requiring immediate action). Notices may also be published in other media. The notice should include the time, date and location of the public hearing, as well as how documents or materials can be reviewed. DRCOG staff should also post the document and public hearing notice to the DRCOG event calendar. Staff should work with the public engagement planner to begin this process.

3 The public provides feedback.

The public may provide comment from the start of the public comment period through the end of the public hearing. (Occasionally the comment period may be extended beyond the hearing.) Those who want to provide public comment can:

- Contact DRCOG staff to express their intent to speak at the public hearing.
- Speak at a public hearing.
- Submit written comments to the DRCOG office during the comment period, via mail or email.
- Post comments online through the DRCOG website or other online engagement tools.

Written and online comments receive the same consideration as comments made at the public hearing.

4 DRCOG hosts the public hearing.

The DRCOG Board of Directors typically hosts public hearings at its monthly meetings. At a formal public hearing, the public can comment on the document. Individuals are typically allowed a maximum of three minutes to share comments. Action on the document is then typically scheduled for the next regular Board meeting.

5 DRCOG staff summarize feedback.

DRCOG staff prepare a written summary of the comments presented at the hearing and received via email, website or letter during the comment period. Staff responses may be provided to balance employees' professional expertise and technical analysis with the public's perspectives. The most common format to compile these responses is in a matrix.

The summary of public comments and staff responses is provided to the relevant DRCOG committee prior to its next regular meeting.

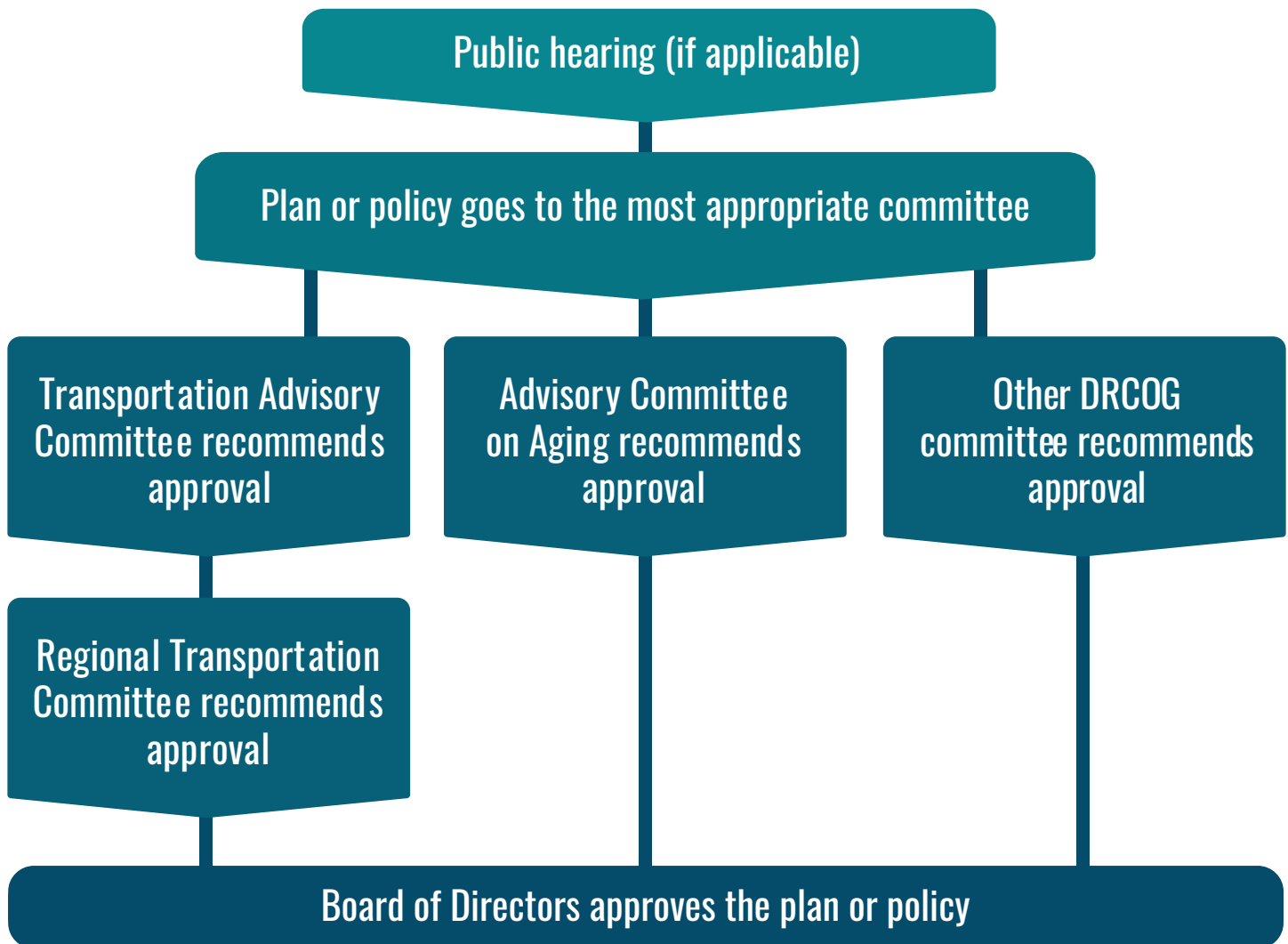
6 The committees act.

After considering public's comments and DRCOG staff's responses, the committees can recommend Board approval of the document.

7 DRCOG publishes the final product.

Staff include the summary of public comments and responses (if applicable) in the final published document or publish it as a separate document.

Committee and Board approval pathway



5



Additional details by topic

DRCOG must follow many different requirements, which can change depending on the plan and topic. Planners at DRCOG should follow the requirements that apply to them.

Requirements can be set by the State of Colorado, the federal government, DRCOG and DRCOG's partners.

DRCOG employees must provide the public with a "full and fair" opportunity to participate. This means public engagement should never be cosmetic. DRCOG staff should give people a real chance to hear about the project, understand it and respond. This will ensure DRCOG's compliance with all public engagement regulations, laws and principles.

Metropolitan planning organization

Requirements

DRCOG must include public participation in transportation planning. This is described in current surface transportation legislation and affects all transportation plans.

For more information on Code of Federal Regulations requirements, refer to [Appendix A: Planning laws and regulations](#) (page 54).

Current requirements emphasize broad participation. DRCOG staff should work to identify and expand engagement with historically underrepresented communities. Transportation planning must also include state and local officials, transit operators, and the public.

The Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration also have requirements. DRCOG's planning process must include proactive public engagement. This includes:

- Complete information.
- Timely notice.
- Public access to key decisions.
- Involving the public throughout plan development.
- Involving the public in creating key transportation plans.

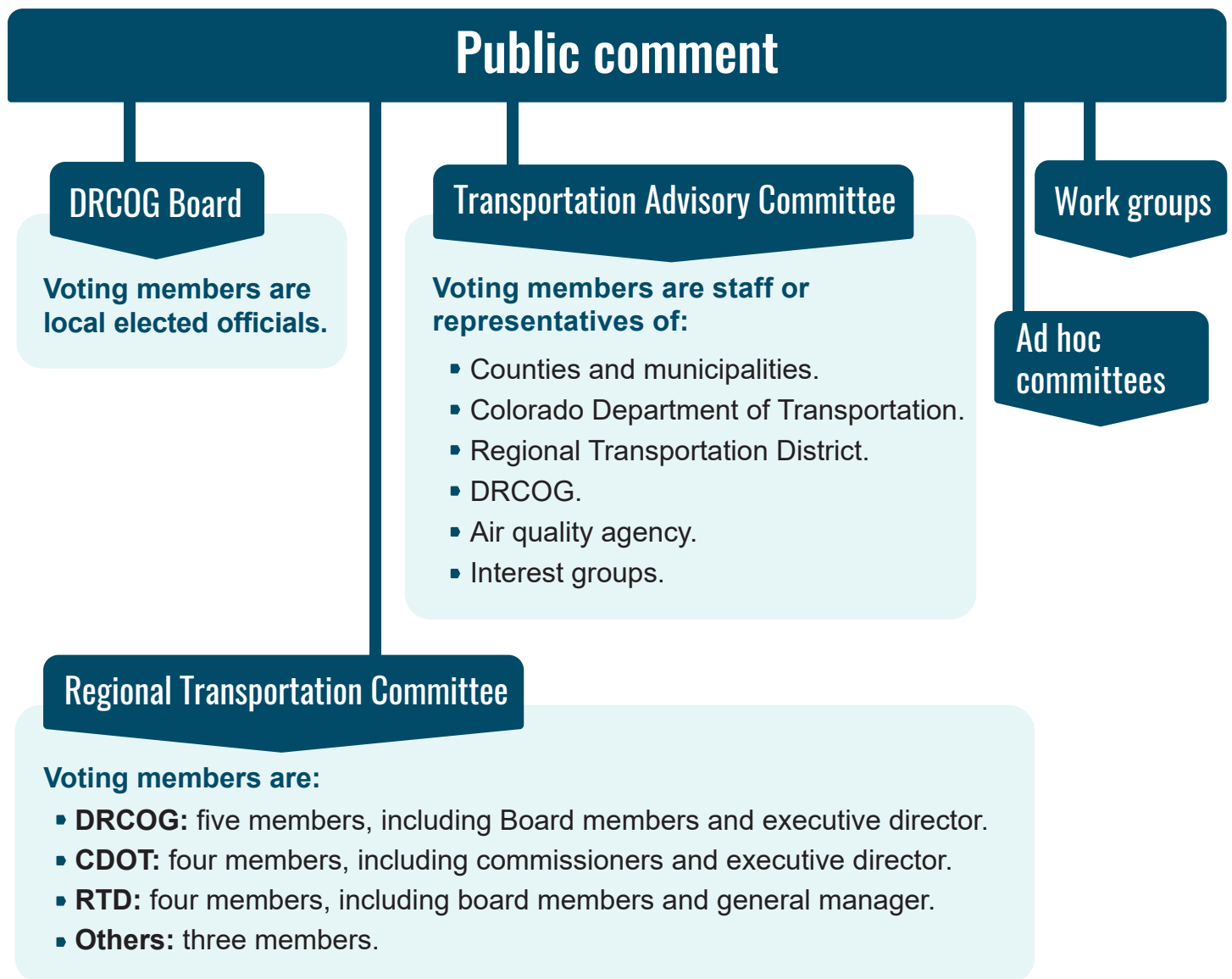
Key transportation plans and public engagement methods

Project	Lead organization	Typical engagement
Active Transportation Plan	DRCOG	Ad hoc advisory groups, DRCOG committees, focus groups, website and email notifications, public review and comment period
Coordinated Transit Plan	DRCOG	Focus groups, roundtables with stakeholders, surveys, DRCOG committees, transportation forums, presentations
Corridor and community plans	CDOT, RTD, DRCOG, local governments	Task forces, public meetings in the study area, neighborhood meetings, other outreach efforts
Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan	DRCOG	Public interest forums at key points, transportation forums, DRCOG committees, public hearing and comment period, workshops, presentations, surveys, website
Project development (safety projects, bus rapid transit plans and other implementation efforts)	Implementing jurisdiction	Task forces, committees in the project area, public meetings at key decision points
Regional Complete Streets Toolkit	DRCOG	Transportation forums, DRCOG committees, posting materials to website, eblasts, social media, comment period
Regional Multimodal Freight Plan	DRCOG	Focus groups, roundtables with stakeholders, surveys, DRCOG committees, posting materials to website, eblasts, social media, comment period

Project	Lead organization	Typical engagement
Regional Transportation Operations and Technology Strategic Plan	DRCOG	Roundtables with stakeholders
Section 5310 Program Management Plan	DRCOG	DRCOG committees, posting materials to website, comment period
Strategic plans or programming documents	DRCOG	Stakeholder work groups, DRCOG committees, sharing draft documents on website
Taking Action on Regional Vision Zero	DRCOG	Stakeholder workshops, focus groups, transportation forums, DRCOG committees, posting materials to website, eblasts, social media, public review and comment period
Transportation Demand Management Strategic Plan	DRCOG	Ad hoc advisory groups, DRCOG committees, focus groups, website and email notifications, public review, comment period
Transportation Improvement Program	DRCOG	Public hearings, DRCOG committees, transportation forums, posting materials to website, eblasts, social media, interactive webmap, comment period
Unified Planning Work Program	DRCOG	Transportation forums, DRCOG committees, posting materials to website, eblasts, social media, comment period

For more information on how to coordinate with CDOT and RTD, please reference the [memorandum of agreement for transportation planning and programming](#). This document outlines the three agencies' plans for communication, collaboration and coordination in transportation planning. This agreement, updated in 2023, is the metropolitan planning agreement required by federal regulation.

Opportunities for public comment on transportation plans





OPPORTUNITIES

ASPIR

Regional planning and other initiatives

Requirements

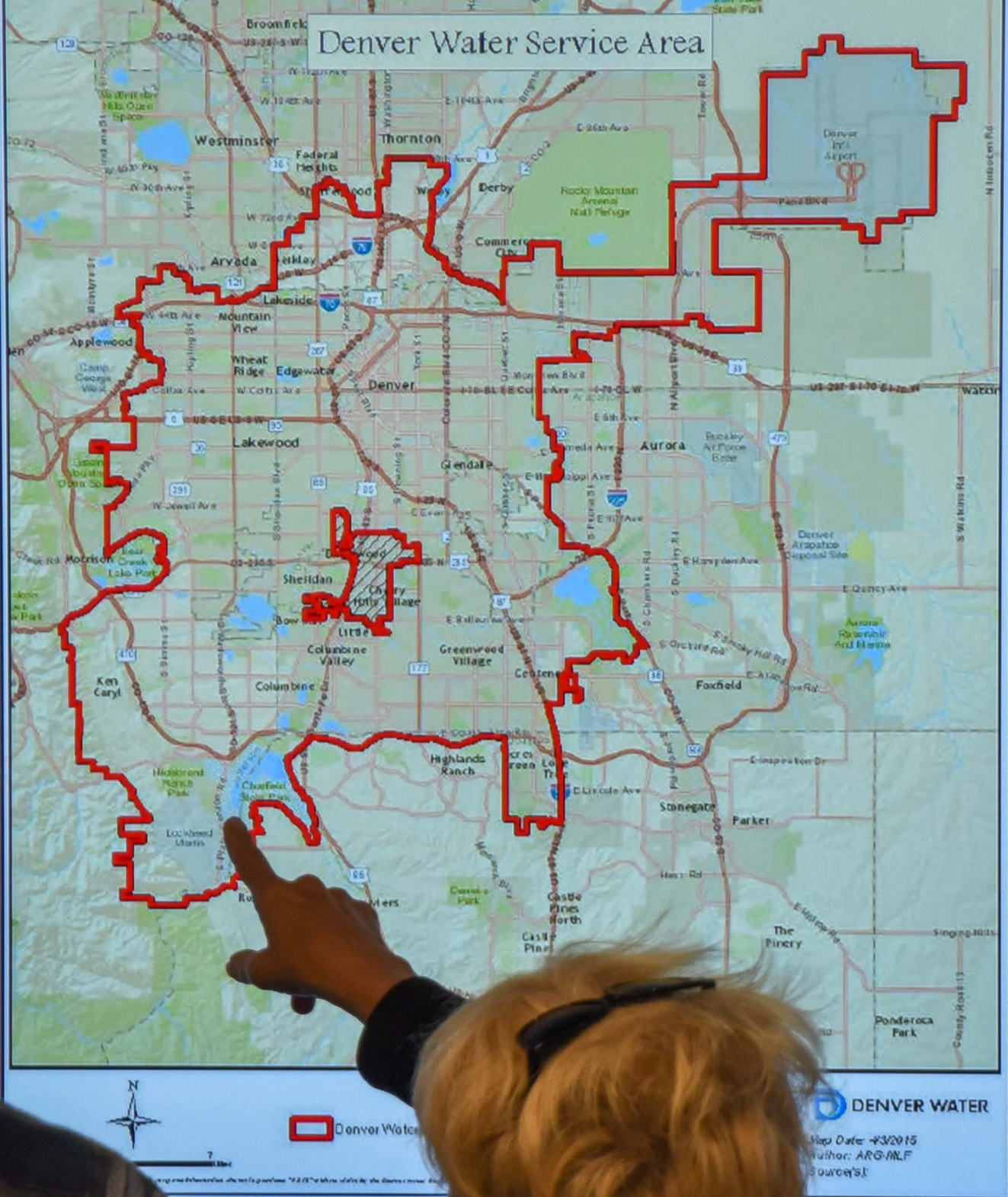
DRCOG’s regional planners have to follow many of the same requirements transportation planners do.

Regional planners work on Metro Vison, DRCOG’s master plan. This comes with specific requirements that are often updated each cycle. DRCOG staff should research the latest requirements when updating the plan.

- Metro Vision requires:
- A public hearing.
 - Notice of public hearing. DRCOG to encourage public participation.
 - Public comment to be considered in the planning process.
 - DRCOG to try to harmonize the master plans of its member governments.

Key regional plans and public engagement methods

Project	Responsible organization	Typical engagement
Climate Pollution Reduction	DRCOG	Workshops and surveys
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy	DRCOG	Targeted focus groups, stakeholder meetings, DRCOG committee review, public hearing, comment period, posting materials to website
Metro Vision	DRCOG	Public interest forums at key points, DRCOG committee review, public hearing and comment period, workshops, presentations, surveys, website
Other regional, corridor or small area plans	DRCOG	Focus groups, surveys, public meetings, pop-ups
Regional Housing Needs Assessment	DRCOG	Stakeholder engagement with housing professionals and municipal governments
Urban centers	DRCOG	Stakeholder roundtables



Area Agency on Aging

DRCOG's Area Agency on Aging stays involved in the lives of the region's older adults, even if there is not a particular project plan staff are working on. The Area Agency on Aging recommends that staff:

- Meet the client where they are: physically, mentally and emotionally.
- Make information accessible by delivering it in a variety of formats accessible to older adults across the region. Considerations include making materials available in multiple languages or offering free translation services, as well as considering visual impairments, hearing impairments and learning disabilities.
- Consider the population being served, including cultural norms, language barriers and the age of clients.

There are many communities that lack resources but have a strong social network. If DRCOG staff go to them, staff can help integrate additional resources into their lives to improve health and well-being.

Requirements

The Older Americans Act established in 1965 enables the delivery of local services and resources to assist older adults as they age. The State Unit on Aging establishes additional policies and guidelines that Colorado area agencies on aging must follow.

When engaging in outreach, area agencies on aging are required to assure that the maximum number of eligible older adults are informed of and have opportunity to participate in services funded by the Older Americans Act. If most older adults speak a language other

than English, staff should provide outreach in that language. DRCOG's Area Agency on Aging manages several programs that may have program-specific guidelines for outreach and engagement as required by the Older Americans Act.

State Health Insurance Assistance

Program, or SHIP: SHIP offers free unbiased Medicare assistance and counseling. The DRCOG Area Agency on Aging oversees the SHIP program for Arapahoe, Douglas and Jefferson counties. Benefits in Action currently manages the other counties within the DRCOG service area. SHIP completes outreach throughout the year to let communities know about this free service.

Choice Services Program In-Home

Vouchers: The Area Agency on Aging issues vouchers for personal and home care assistance. The State Unit on Aging requires staff to conduct satisfaction surveys as part of performance measures.

Case management: The Area Agency on Aging provides intensive short-term case management services for people 60 and older. Case managers conduct a comprehensive needs assessment and help the individual or their caregiver develop a care plan to obtain services and benefits. Case managers help coordinate and monitor services so individuals can live independently and safely.

Caregiver Services: The National Family Caregiver Support Program, or Part E of the Older Americans Act, authorizes five broad types of services for family caregivers. Area agencies on aging must offer services within these five categories and prioritize services to those with greatest social and economic

need, low-income minorities, those with limited English proficiency, rural and frail populations, and older relative caregivers of children with severe disabilities.

Choice Services Program Transportation:

The Area Agency on Aging conducts targeted outreach to underserved communities to let them know about the transportation program.

Veteran Directed Care: Staff stay tuned to relevant requests through the Information and Assistance team.

Information and Assistance: The Information and Assistance team is the first entry point for individuals seeking information or services.

Ombudsmen: The State Ombudsman advises the Area Agency on Aging's Ombudsman Program of any information or trends that could impact services.

Community Options (Transitions):

Transitions counselors educate eligible Medicaid members living in nursing homes, regional centers and intermediate care facilities about community-based living options. Members receive options counseling to support decision-making and may enroll in Medicaid Transition Services.

Older Adult Refugees and Friends: In partnership with the Colorado Refugee Service Program, DRCOG's Older Adult Refugees and Friends program helps older adult refugees decrease their social isolation, increase integration experiences and build community connections. Activities promote health, nutrition and wellness. The program partners with the Aurora Center for Active Adults and other recreation centers.

Area Agency on Aging's four-year plan

The Area Agency on Aging is required through the Older Americans Act to write an Area Plan on Aging that identifies priorities and objectives for services. The Colorado State Unit on Aging requires that Colorado area agencies on aging write a four-year plan, as well as comply with federal guidelines. Staff must target services to certain populations of older adults: those with the greatest economic and social need, low-income minorities, those with limited English proficiency, frail older adults and those residing in rural areas. The Area Plan on Aging must outline how services will be targeted to these populations.

When developing the Area Plan on Aging, Area Agency on Aging staff seek public comment to determine regional needs and priorities, reaching out at least a year in advance of the plan update to allow significant time for public engagement. One method is through the Community Assessment Survey of Older Adults. This survey is developed in collaboration with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and the National Research Center. The objectives of the survey are to:

- Identify community strengths.
- Identify specific needs of older adults.
- Estimate older adults' contributions to the community.
- Determine older adults' connection to the community.

The results of the survey are then presented to the public at in-person events throughout the Area Agency on Aging service area.

Other DRCOG roles

Important engagement work happens in all parts of DRCOG. The Executive Office works with partners throughout the region. Communications and Marketing staff constantly

work to improve DRCOG’s engagement. At the time of writing, the Climate Pollution Reduction team is starting to plan its outreach program.

Other DRCOG plans and typical engagement

Project	Responsible organization	Typical engagement
Public engagement plan	DRCOG	DRCOG committee review, public hearing and comment period
Nondiscrimination program	DRCOG	DRCOG committee review, public hearing and comment period



6



The future of public engagement at DRCOG

How can DRCOG change this plan?

As needs and conditions change, it becomes necessary to revise the plan. For the purposes of this plan, there are two forms of revisions: administrative modifications and amendments.

An administrative modification may involve any revision of references to applicable regulations, misspellings, omissions or clerical and typographical errors. These revisions do not affect the guidelines for public noticing or adoption and amendment of plans and programs. For this type of revision, the process does not involve any formal action by the Board of Directors. DRCOG staff are responsible for preparing the administrative change to the document, submitting the prepared material to necessary state and federal partners, and updating DRCOG's website.

An amendment includes any changes to the substance of the plan. An amendment requires 45 days of public review and comment and formal action by the Board of Directors. For both administrative modifications and amendments, DRCOG staff are responsible for preparing the change to the document, submitting the prepared material to necessary state and federal partners, and updating DRCOG's website.

This plan was last amended in 2025 with a public comment and review period.

DRCOG strives to improve

Each year, DRCOG staff evaluate the agency's public engagement and document it in the annual Public Engagement Report. This document:

- Summarizes engagement for the year.
- Reports statistics on engagement methods.
- Lists major public events in the past year.
- Describes staff's plans for public engagement in the next year.

DRCOG staff continue to evaluate the agency's engagement and improve each year.

Future DRCOG plans and engagement

DRCOG is committed to transparency and access to services, information and the decision-making process. Planning is about people and the communities they call home. Community participation improves all plans, policies, services and projects, and helps DRCOG meet people's needs today and into the future.

DRCOG is committed to an engagement model that fosters shared problem-solving, supportive partnerships and reciprocal relationships. DRCOG staff believe that the region's decision-makers need to receive the full range of residents' perspectives to better understand issues, explore alternatives and create a shared action plan. Staff strive to provide clear and concise information, be responsive, and address ideas and concerns raised.

DRCOG continues to improve outreach and engagement. For example, the new Climate Pollution Reduction program will launch a whole new outreach effort, including:

- Workshops.
- Surveys.
- Public comment.
- Varied scheduling and attendance options.
- Events in locations accessible via public transportation.
- Language assistance.

To reach these goals, the staff working on the Climate Pollution Reduction program plan to:

- Incorporate early, meaningful and iterative community engagement in each phase of the project.
- Lean on community-based organizations for local expertise.
- Hire a consultant to consolidate and manage engagement.
- Incentivize people to participate in engagement.

Each day, DRCOG staff contribute to enhancing and protecting the quality of life in the region. Alongside member governments,

DRCOG plans, funds and delivers services to maximize the benefit to the region's residents.

The information in this plan can be customized and adapted for each project. DRCOG staff must commit to meaningful public engagement for this plan to be successful. While this plan is a resource and a guide, only follow-through and commitment by DRCOG employees will ensure success. This will be a team effort that will include the public engagement planner, senior staff and resources throughout the organization.

The process and tactics in this plan are a place to begin. Successful public engagement depends on a shared commitment throughout all levels of the organization to involve the public and to take responsibility for facilitating engagement activities.





Appendix A: Planning laws and regulations

Transportation planning requirements

Law or regulation common name	Citation
Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)	Amended 23 U.S.C. Public Law 117-58 Note: This legislation replaced the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act
Consultation	Code of Federal Regulations, Title 40, Chapter I, Subchapter C, Part 93, Subpart A, § 93.105
Joint Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration planning rule	Code of Federal Regulations, Title 49, Subtitle B, Chapter VI, Part 613
Metropolitan Planning and Programming	Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, Subchapter E, Part 450, Subpart C § 450.316
Metropolitan Planning and Programming: Interested parties, participation and consultation	Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, Subchapter E, Part 450, Subpart C § 450.316

This list is a starting point and may not include all federal requirements. Please refer to the latest U.S. Department of Transportation guidance.

Other planning requirements

Law or regulation common name	Citation
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	42 U.S.C. Chapter 216 § 12101 et seq.
CFR 200, Grants and Agreements	Code of Federal Regulations, Title 2, Subtitle A, Chapter II, Part 200
Colorado Accessibility Law, Colorado Anti-Discrimination Act (CADA)	8 CCR 1501-11 Technology Accessibility Rules House Bill 21-1110
DRCOG's Duties	DRCOG's Articles of Association, Article XII
Older Americans Act (OAA)	42 U.S.C. Chapter 35 § 3001 et seq.
Regional Planning Requirements	Colorado Revised Statutes Section 30-28-106(2)(a)
Sustainable Affordable Housing Assistance	Colorado Senate Bill 24-174
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964	Amended 42 U.S.C. Public Law 88-352

This list is a starting point and may not include all federal requirements. Please refer to the latest guidance published by the relevant federal agency.





Appendix B: Public engagement planner assistance form

When requesting assistance from the public engagement planner, DRCOG staff will need to fill out this form, which is designed to help staff figure out the project's purpose and expectations for public engagement.

The purpose of this project is to:

This project will result in:

The purpose of public engagement for this project is to:

Members of the public who should be engaged are:

Note: Refer to [Appendix C](#) for help determining potential participants.

The public engagement will be successful if:

This project will be successful if:

Does this project use a consultant? Be sure to connect the public engagement planner with the consultant project manager if so.



Appendix C: Potential participants

Partner organizations

- Chambers of commerce.
- City, county and local government staff.
- Community-based service providers (such as Volunteers of America or family service organizations).
- Economic development corporations.
- Federal Highway Administration.
- Federal lands management agencies.
- Federal regulatory agencies.
- Federal Transit Administration.
- State divisions, agencies, commissions and boards.
- Regional Transportation District.
- Transportation management associations.

Community agencies and emergency service providers

- 911 dispatch staff.
- Ambulance services.
- Community emergency operations departments.
- Conservation districts.
- Fire districts.
- Hazardous materials responders.
- Hospitals.
- Irrigation districts.
- Police departments.
- School bus fleet managers.
- School districts.
- Sheriff's departments.
- State patrol.
- Water, sewer or fire protection districts.



Tip for success

Reach out to community leaders to find locals who are interested in participating.

Shipping and freight

- Port authority.
- Railroad associations.
- Railroad companies.
- Trucking companies.
- Trucking associations.

Conservation, open space and agriculture

- Agricultural organizations and farm bureaus.
- Agriculture companies.
- Conservation interest groups (such as Metro Denver Nature Alliance, Natural Resources Defense Council, Nature Conservancy or Sierra Club).
- Environmental centers.
- Forest product companies.
- Parks.
- Wildlife interest groups (such as Audubon Society, Trout Unlimited or Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation).

Media

- Newspaper.
- Online media.
- Radio.
- Television.

Special interest groups

- Advocacy organizations.
- Affordable housing advocates.
- Automobile associations (such as AAA).
- Bicycle associations (such as Bicycle Colorado, People for Bikes).
- Community service clubs (such as Kiwanis, Optimist, Junior League or League of Women Voters).
- Disability or access organizations (such as Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition or the Denver Regional Mobility and Access Coalition).
- Environmental interest groups.
- Older adult organizations (such as AARP).
- Pedestrian associations (such as Montbello Walks).
- Professional organizations (such as American Planning Association, WTS International or Urban Land Institute).
- Religious organizations.
- Workforce development nonprofits.

Property owners

- Those adjacent to or somewhat affected by the project.
- Those along corridors related to the project.
- Those directly affected by the project.

Community members

- Bicyclists.
- Communities of speakers of languages other than English.
- Communities representing a variety of ethnic and racial backgrounds.

- Commuters.
- Individuals with disabilities.
- Low-income communities.
- Neighborhood associations.
- Neighborhood residents.
- Pedestrians.
- Public transit users.
- Residents along affected corridors.
- Residents of the city, county or town.
- Residents in the vicinity.
- Tenant unions.

Outreach to elected officials looks very different than professional networking, and the Executive Office specializes in this kind of outreach. Contact the Executive Office for help working with elected officials from DRCOG's member governments.

Elected officials, local jurisdictions, commissions

- City and town council members.
- City and county managers.
- Colorado Commission on Aging.
- Colorado Transportation Commission.
- County commissioners.
- County commissions on aging.
- DRCOG Board of Directors.
- Elected officials serving DRCOG's member governments.
- State representatives.
- State senators.
- U.S. representatives.
- U.S. senators.

Culture and tourism

- Area attractions.
- Arts associations.
- Arts districts.
- Entertainment venues.
- Fairgrounds.
- Festival organizers.
- Tourism bureaus.
- Visitors centers.

Business owners and employees

- Commercial business areas.
- Delivery companies.
- Health clinics.
- Health systems.
- Industrial parks.
- Labor unions.

- Office complexes.
- Those affected by the project or along affected corridors.
- Those in the city, county or town.
- Those in the neighborhood.
- Those in the vicinity.
- Utilities.

Services

- Charter bus companies.
- Colorado CarShare.
- Homeless navigation services.
- Libraries.
- Private transit providers.
- Truck stops.
- Utility companies.
- Vanpool companies.



A graphic of a sign with a blue and green geometric pattern. The text "Welcome! ¡Bienvenidos!" is at the top, and "Check in here." is at the bottom. The sign is set against a background of a blurred photo of a community health fair.

Welcome!
¡Bienvenidos!

Check in here.

Appendix D: Additional resources

Tools and resources for identifying and engaging underrepresented communities

Effectively engaging underrepresented communities requires a thoughtful approach and access to the right tools and resources. Use these resources to help identify groups, understand their needs and implement meaningful engagement strategies.

Additionally, the public engagement planner will continue to identify further resources and work directly with staff to help ensure many voices are heard and included in public engagement.

[Colorado Broadband Hub](#)

Access a state map of communities without broadband internet access. Use this source to determine where virtual engagement strategies will or will not work. (This version is less detailed than Federal Communications Commission National Broadband Map, but it loads faster.)

[DRCOG Equity Index](#)

Download or explore the data for more information on marginalized communities.

[DRCOG Maps](#)

Find various maps created by DRCOG staff. The most relevant to public engagement are the [DRCOG data tool](#) and [race and ethnicity map](#).

[Federal Communications Commission National Broadband Map](#)

Access a national map of communities without broadband internet access. Use this source to determine where virtual engagement strategies will/will not work. (More detailed than Colorado version, but loads slower.)

Resources, examples, best practices

Use these items for brainstorming, additional details and further reading.

[Hemingway App](#)

Use this resource to test if your writing is concise as you prepare public-facing documents.

[IAP2 Engagement Toolbox](#)

Find more details on public engagement techniques, along with tips for success and common pitfalls.

[Readable](#)

Test if your writing is readable. Use this resource to test the readability of your writing as you prepare public-facing documents.

[Plain language](#)

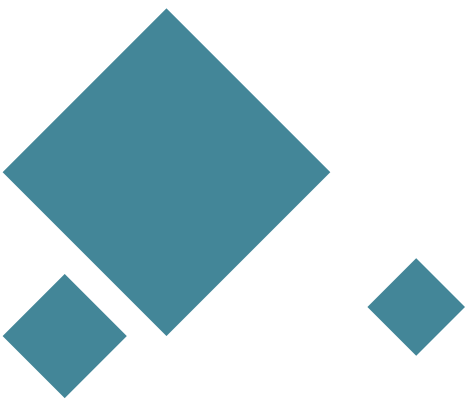
Discover guides and examples from the federal government on how to write clearly.

[U.S. Department of Transportation's Plain Language Checklist](#)

Run your document through this checklist to make sure it's understandable to a general audience.



Appendix E: Board resolution



Denver Regional Council of Governments
State of Colorado

Board of Directors

Resolution No. 5, 2025

A resolution approving/adopting the 2025 Public Engagement Plan.

Whereas, the Denver Regional Council of Governments, as the Metropolitan Planning Organization, is responsible for carrying out and maintaining the continuing comprehensive transportation planning process designed to prepare and adopt regional transportation plans and programs; and

Whereas, the transportation planning process within the Denver region is carried out by the Denver Regional Council of Governments through a cooperative agreement with the Regional Transportation District and the Colorado Department of Transportation; and

Whereas, federal regulations require Metropolitan Planning Organizations to develop a public participation plan and establish, periodically review and update public participation processes; and

Whereas, the Denver Regional Council of Governments is committed to planning and implementing meaningful public engagement on other projects in addition to its functions as the Metropolitan Planning Organization; and


Whereas, the document 2025 Public Engagement Plan was prepared that describes principles and procedures for public engagement, guidance for planning and implementing effective engagement, and responds to state and federal regulations pertaining to public participation in the metropolitan transportation planning process; and

Whereas, the draft 2025 Public Engagement Plan was the subject of an advertised 45-day public comment period and a public hearing on June 18, 2025; and

Whereas, the Transportation Advisory Committee and the Regional Transportation Committee have recommended adoption of the 2025 Public Engagement Plan.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Board of Directors of the Denver Regional Council of Governments hereby adopts the 2025 Public Engagement Plan.

Resolved, passed, and adopted this 20th day of August, 2025 at Denver, Colorado.



Jeff Baker, Chair
Board of Directors
Denver Regional Council of Governments

ATTEST:



Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director



Public Engagement Plan

Denver Regional Council of Governments
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